

Opposition to Petition for Reconsideration

I am opposed to both of the recently filed “Petitions for Reconsideration”. Neither of the petitions has merit.

Gordon:

In the “Gordon” petition, the premise is that “national security” and “the war on terror” will somehow falter if the code test is eliminated from the Amateur Radio Service. This has no basis in fact, and is not supported by any evidence, neither in the petition nor in any of the comments that have previously been filed. Gordon has failed to show how any harm can or could come to “national security” by a code test removal. In fact, the US military has abandoned the use of manual morse code in favor of more sophisticated and reliable transmission methods. To claim that amateur operators could be “a hedge against unanticipated national security events” is just not supported by any source. Amateur operators who are proficient in code will continue to exist, with or without code testing.

If some amateurs want to perceive themselves as a “hedge” or “backup”, they are free to do so. Participation in emergency operations is a purely voluntary activity in the amateur community. This petition seeks to blur that line, and define amateur operators as some sort of “fallback” position for “national security” issues. Any form of “national security” or military type operations are best kept off of the highly insecure amateur frequencies, especially using a low security mode such as plain text morse (which is the only thing that amateurs have been tested for). A message transmitted in this fashion would be open for any and all to intercept.

Ward:

The Ward petition has some points that could be addressed. Certainly, the FCC is obligated to try and do the best job possible of receiving and categorizing each and every comment. But it is inconceivable that a ruling should be dismissed based on the fact that some comments may have been lost or misplaced.

The comments that Ward made, and that are the subject of this petition, had already been made dozens of times by other persons. His “lost comments” contained nothing new or revealing about the issue at hand, and certainly would not have changed the outcome of the decision.

For the above reasons, I urge the Commission to reject both of these petitions outright.

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